



How to Prevent Rodents

Common Species:

House Mouse- House mice are small rodents with large ears and small eyes. They are usually light gray in color and are usually 5 ½ to 7 ½ inches long including a 3 to 4 inch tail. They will eat almost anything and normally travel 10 to 30 ft. They have keen senses of hearing, smell, taste, and touch. They are excellent climbers and can jump up 12 inches from the floor onto a flat surface. They can squeeze through openings about ¼ inch in diameter. A female can have 5 to 10 litters of 5 to 6 young in a single year. Young reach maturity in 6 to 10 weeks. Therefore, a small mouse problem can become a large one quickly!

Norway Rat- Norway rats are 13 to 18 inches long including a 6 to 9 inch tail. Their fur is coarse, brownish and scattered with black hair on the upper surfaces. Their belly fur is typically gray to yellowish white. They will eat almost anything and their range is 100 to 150 ft. They have keen senses of hearing, smell, taste and touch. They will climb to find food or shelter and can gain entrance to a building through a hole about ½ inch in diameter. A female can have 4 to 6 litters of 6 to 12 young per year. Young rats mature in about 3 months. Therefore, the infestation can increase rapidly if not addressed!

Spotting an Infestation: The presence of rodents is usually indicated by their droppings, evidence of gnawing or actually observing a mouse or rat. You may find evidence of nesting such as pieces of straw, string, rope, torn plastic or paper bags. You may also observe their tracks on dusty surfaces. Rat burrows may be found outside the building or alongside fences. Runs or areas frequently traveled by rodents may be observable. House mice have a distinctive odor that may allude to their presence.

To prevent and control rodents from living on your property, you must remove the 3 things that they need to survive; food, water and shelter.

Food Sources

- Remove pet food when not in use
- Keep birdseed in a feeder, rather than on the ground
- Clean up fallen fruits and nuts
- Clean up pet waste often
- Ensure garbage is stored in a garbage can with a tight fitting lid.

Water Sources

- Do not leave pet bowls, children's toys, old tires on the ground or allow water to collect in them
- Regularly clean/change bird bath water and keep it off the ground

Shelter Sources

- Keep grass mowed down and cut weeds regularly
- Check structures for any entry points that might need to be sealed up (weather stripping and door sweeps)
- Elevate woodpiles off the ground
- Store outside items off the ground and away from walls

Rodent Trapping Tips for the Homeowner

- Snap traps can be used to catch rodents such as mice or rats. Glue traps can be used for mice and smaller rats.
- Good baits for traps include hot dog slices, bacon and nuts. Peanut butter is a good bait for snap traps but should not be used on glue traps as the vegetable oil could break down the glue.
- Traps should be set along runways, along walls, behinds objects and in dark corners.
- Traps should be set where there is evidence of activity such as droppings or gnaw marks.
- Be sure to set enough traps, up to a dozen traps may be needed for a house.
- Boxes and objects can be moved around to create narrow runways to the traps.
- Inspect traps frequently to remove dead rodents and change the old bait.
- If using a glue trap, it should be secured with a nail or wire so it can't be dragged by the rodent. After capture on a glue trap the rodent should be disposed of humanely.
- Be sure to follow directions on the label and keep traps in areas where they cannot be reached by pets or kids.

When contacting SCPH inspectors for Rodent Baiting keep in mind:

- SCPH only bait for Rats; not groundhogs, mice, opossums, raccoons, etc.
- SCPH only bait the exterior of the house/ garage.
- SCPH only bait in areas inaccessible to children and other animals.
- If rats are entering the home from plumbing fixtures, make sure that floor drains are covered and secure, basement toilet seats are kept closed and any openings large enough for a rat to enter are secured. In some cases a device might need to be installed on a plumbing line to prevent the rodents from entering such as: a rat flap or non-return valve.
- Sanitation efforts, removing any food or water sources and eliminating clutter, are the first step in controlling rodents.



House Mouse



Norway Rat

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